

Update from “The Clerk” of Elbert County

When people ask me, “Well, how’s the new job?” I can honestly say, “I LOVE MY STAFF and the ‘Colorado County Clerk’s Assn’ (CCCA).” There are 64 Clerks in Colorado and I have met the most incredibly knowledgeable, flexible, multi-tasking people who are faithfully serving the people of their counties, some for as many as 26 years!

Here in Elbert County I have had a very busy year. New job descriptions are in place and being lived out. Policies and procedures are taking shape for processes that “get the job done.” The Clerk and

Elections Mgr. are well-along with Election Certification through the Secretary of State’s office (which takes 2 years to complete). Motor Vehicle employees are taking State MV Training. The Recording Office has handled increased business with less employees because of budget cuts. Everyone is actively involved in identifying “issues” involving customers, and helping improve business flow and service to the citizens of Elbert County with the resources we have.

Challenges for 2012

Through Elections, Motor Vehicle, and Recording we interact with most of the citizens of Elbert County. As we have handed out customer comment cards throughout 2011 we have received encouraging feedback from you.

For 2012 we will be challenged more than ever in Motor Vehicle as we operate with less staff than 2011. These are tough times. Money is tight for citizens and for government. The commissioners refused the position request I felt we needed for Recording to provide checks and balances through quality checking and verifying processes. In order to meet the Recording staffing needs a position had to be eliminated from Motor Vehicle to fill the Recording gap. We have put in place some “special cross-trained teams” to support MV. We appreciate your understanding as we take on this difficult challenge.

State-Wide Frustration

One common citizen frustration is “**I didn’t receive my renewal card.**” The State MV sends the card information via computer to County MV departments. The file is downloaded onto cards (and in Elbert County we print a copy of the download for our records). Then the cards are printed, postage is metered on them here at our office, and they are taken to the Post Office.

Customers come in late to renew their plates and complain, “I didn’t get my card!” One customer came in with a magazine he received in the mail, held it up over the counter and 10 renewal cards fell out, none of them belonging to the customer.

We can’t protect the cards through the automated processes and we can’t fix the process after it leaves our office. Our best solution for this frustration is to recommend that you

mark your renewal date on your personal calendar.

To do that, look at your license plate and record the month



it expires. You will need to renew it before that month is over. We are going to mark our personal calendars too, because the flaws in the system even affect the Clerk Office Staff. Fines for late renewals are assessed to the citizen by State Motor Vehicle and we can’t waive them!

Looking Ahead To “Election Year 2012”

We are researching and considering the Vote Center Model for 2012. In 2002, the United States 107th Congress passed the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which was signed into law in November of the same year. HAVA provided the new legal framework for voting accessibility in the United States.

The Vote Center Model came about in response to implementing the new requirements of HAVA as well as a vision of a more efficient, consistent voting system. The Larimer County Elections Department pioneered the Vote Center Model using Vote Centers for the 2003 Coordinated Election, both the Primary and General Elections in 2006 and 2008. Morgan County has been using the model since 2006.

In the State of Colorado, “Vote Center” is defined as “a polling place at which any registered elector in the political subdivision holding the election may vote, regardless of the precinct in which the elector resides.” (Colorado Revised Statutes 1-4-104 (49.8).

Vote Center Benefits include:

- There are cost savings in many areas including: fewer election workers and supplies
- Poll worker recruitment focuses on experienced, qualified personnel, leading to more efficient and accurate elections
- Political parties and candidates need fewer volunteers for poll watching
- Vote Centers work well with paper ballots and are ideal with electronic equipment which can contain all ballot styles and still provide specific precinct reporting

Other Colorado counties have implemented the vote center model and reports are citizens and election officials are very happy with it. Statute sets a population requirement for Vote Centers in which one center is required for every 10,000 Active, Registered Voters.

Having Vote Centers in Elbert county would mean Elbert county citizens would have the choice of

- Registering for a Mail-IN Ballot
 - Early Voting in person in Kiowa
 - Voting at any of the Voting Centers in the County
- Major and Minor political parties would be consulted in site selection.

Diana Hartsough
Elbert County Clerk and Recorder
303-621-3116

Clerk to BOCC:

303-621-3115

Elections:

303-621-3127

Motor Vehicles:

303-621-3125

Recording:

303-621-3181

Website: Elbertcountyclerk.com

E-Mail: Diana.hartsough@elbertcountyclerk-co.gov

Register to VOTE!

If you did not vote in the last general election in August of 2010, you must register again to be eligible to vote in the Presidential Election of 2012. Every vote counts!